

# Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Program

Request for Initial Proposals for FY2005

## OVERVIEW:

**Federal Agency Name:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1, Office of Ecosystem Protection, Chemicals Management Branch

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Program Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP)

**Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CDFA):** Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CDFA) Number 66.716

**Geographic Area :** Projects must be located in 1 or more of the following Region 1 states: **Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont**

## Action Dates:

<b>Receipt of Proposal</b>	<b>Tuesday, August 17, 2004 5 PM EST</b>
EPA Region 1 Evaluation	Tuesday, August 24, 2004
Request for Complete Application	Tuesday, August 31, 2004
Receipt of Complete Application	Thursday, September 30, 2004
Expected Funding Decision	Friday, October 29, 2004
Expected Grant Award Notification	Monday, November 29, 2004

## Executive Summary

EPA Region 1 Pesticide Program is seeking proposals from eligible organizations that will reduce the exposure to toxic pesticides through the adoption of farm pest management practices that transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides.

The in-field adoption by farmers of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. The project will work towards achieving the adoption of reduced-risk alternatives and /or ecologically-based IPM or biologically integrated farming approaches that are economical and have positive impacts on soil health and water

quality. The project should engage scientists, farmers, commodity organizations/groups, industry, and local, state and federal partners.

For this competition, the Program has \$92,000 available for grants under this request for proposals. Project periods are not to exceed 2 years.

### **Funding Opportunity Description**

1. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) 66.716 states that the intended use of these funds is to support Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training Demonstrations, Educational Outreach and Special Purpose assistance relating to the protection of public health and the environment from potential risk from toxic chemicals to come. The statutory authority for this grant program is under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74. These statutory authorities are:

FIFRA Section 20

TSCA Section 10

Public Law 106-74 106th Congress

The Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) EPA's outreach program to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of farm pest management practices that will enable growers to transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides. The SAI encourages the development of pest management practices and products that are safe, effective and support the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). The in-field adoption by farmers of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. The program supports innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management.

Proposed projects must focus on achieving the following objectives:

1. Growers significantly reduce or eliminate the use of organophosphate, carbamate or other pesticides impacted by FQPA.
2. Implement reduced risk alternatives and /or ecologically based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) successfully adopted on a significant number of acres under commercial production.

In order to achieve the two objectives above, the project will entail demonstration, extension, outreach and/or education on integrated or sustainable agricultural production practices in partnership with producers, commodity groups and other agricultural stakeholders by making the best use of expert field consultants, USDA research, EPA's safer substitutes, and university supported technical support on alternatives and pest management practices.

## **Award Information**

For this competition, the Program anticipates awarding 2-3 proposals with no one project receiving more than \$50,000 to an eligible applicant. The program plans to award grant agreements with a project period of no more than 2 years. Funding and project periods can extend for no more than two years. The suggested start date for the project is January 1, 2005. Please note, based on the availability of funds and the quality of applications, EPA reserves the right to award no grants under this Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP).

## **Eligibility Information**

### **1. A. Eligible Applicants**

Assistance under this program is generally available to any State, U.S. territories or possession, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, commodity organizations and agricultural grower groups, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private non-profit institutions and individuals. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

### **B. Cost Sharing Or Matching**

While matching funds are not required, we encourage applicants to leverage cash and/or in-kind contributions from partner organizations.

### **C. Threshold Criteria**

All organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must meet the eligibility criteria above, and focus on at least one of the two objectives listed in the "Executive Summary" and the "Funding Opportunity Description" sections above. Proposed projects must take place in one or more Region 1 States (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont). In addition, all proposed project activities and costs must be eligible under the authorizing statute discussed in the Section titled "Funding Opportunity Description" above. Proposals that do not meet these threshold criteria will be rejected without further evaluation.

## **APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **1. Address to Request Application Package**

Application forms should not be submitted along with initial proposals. Please follow the instructions provided in the section below titled, "Content and Form of Proposal Submission." If you are invited to submit a full application, application kits are available at <http://www.epa.gov/region1/grants/index.html> or by contacting the EPA Contact. The application package will include completed forms of the application kit. The application kit includes information and contacts for this process. Completed applications should be submitted to:

**EPA Region 1 Grants Management Office (MGM)**

**Office of Administration and Resource Management  
1 Congress Street Suite 1100  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114**

**A. Content and Form of Proposal Submission**

1. Applications not following the format will not be considered. Proposals should be typed, in 12 point or larger print with minimum 1 inch horizontal and vertical margins. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the appendices. Any information that you consider confidential should be clearly marked. EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B.

One hard copy, and one copy on a 3.5" disk, "IBM" compatible, readable in MS Word or Word Perfect WP6/7/8 for Windows, or on a CD ROM should be submitted. Disks will be checked for computer viruses; proposals that are submitted with viruses will be disqualified.

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked using the evaluation criteria noted below. Submission of the proposal is the most significant phase in the competitive process. For proposed work plans that would collect environmental data, a quality assurance project plan is not required at the time of submittal but will be required if and when you are invited to submit a complete application for the next phase of the competition. Specific instructions for preparing the full application will be provided at that time. EPA Region 1 reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no awards.

**Cover Page (page 1)**

1. Provide the following information:

Title and Date of this Funding Opportunity Announcement:

PROJECT TITLE:

PROJECT COORDINATOR:

Organization:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail address:

Fax:

PROJECT DURATION:

TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST: REQUEST MATCHING FUNDS

(Not Required)

Non-Federal Federal

First Year Funding: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Year Funding: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Funding

Request: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Executive Summary (page 2)**

The Executive Summary shall be a stand-alone document, not to exceed one page, containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary should identify the measurable environmental results you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits.

## **Table of Contents (page 3)**

A one page table listing the different parts of your proposal and the page number on which each part begins.

## **Proposal Narrative (pages 4 - 14 or less)**

(Parts I through V listed below are not to exceed 10 pages)

### **Part I. Project Title**

**Part II. Objectives** A numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives - in most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.

**Part III. Justification** For each objective listed in Part II above, discuss the potential outcome in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. If appropriate, the target pest(s) and crop(s) should be explicitly stated. This section should be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective. Clearly describe how the project goals, tasks, and expected outcomes fit with the statutory authority associated therewith. For the FQPA/Strategic Agricultural Initiative program, the statutory authority is the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74.

### **Statutory Authority:**

**TSCA Section 10** <http://www.epa.gov/region5/defs/html/tsca.htm>

**Public Law 106-74 106th Congress** <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/>

**Part IV. Approach and Methods** Describe in detail how the program will be carried out. Describe how the system or approach will support the program goals.

**Part V. Impact Assessment** Please state how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable environmental results. How and with what measures will humans or ecosystems be better protected as a result of the program. Also describe in detail how the information gained from the project will be shared with the agricultural community.

## **Proposal Appendices**

Continue page numbering. The appendices listed below must be included in the grant proposal. The appendices may be single spaced. Additional appendices are not permitted.

A. Timetable A: Timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.

B. Major Participants: This appendix should list all farmers/ranchers, farm/ranch organizations, researchers, educators, and conservationists and others having a major role in the proposal. Provide name, organizational affiliation or occupation (such as farmer) and a description of the role each will play in the project. A brief resume (not to exceed two pages) should be submitted for each major researcher or other educator.

1. C. Project Budget Provide: A budget matrix similar to the blank matrix below. Identify how the requested funds are to be used and also identify how other funding will be used in this project. Please include an indirect cost rate if applicable.

**Project Budget** (This page will be "Appendix D", the last full page)

Project Period: From:

To:

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>
<b>Personnel</b>			
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>			
<b>Travel</b>			
<b>Equipment</b>			
<b>Supplies</b>			
<b>Contractual</b>			
<b>Indirect Cost</b>			
<b>Other (detail):</b>			
<b>Total</b>			

## **Submission Dates and Times**

**Proposals must be received no later than the date and time indicated above. If a proposal is submitted late, it will be rejected without further evaluation.**

### **1. Intergovernmental Review**

Note that final applications will be subject to review under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

## **Limitations of Funding**

Please refer to the applicable cost principles in the Office of Management and Budget Circulars; e.g.:

OMB Circular A-21, Educational Institutions (8/8/00)

OMB Circular A-87, State and Local Governments (5/4/95, amended 8/29/97)

OMB Circular A-122, Non-Profit Organizations (5/19/98)

## **APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **Criteria**

1. Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria below. Proposals may receive up to **95 points**. In addition to the points awarded for the criteria, up to 3 additional points will be awarded if matching and/or leveraged funds are provided.

**Qualifications and experience (10 points).** Projects will be scored based on the applicants' experience in the field of the proposed activity, and whether the properly trained staff, facilities and infrastructure are in place to conduct the project.

**1. Project description and justification (total of 35 points).** Reviewers will focus on the following components:

- a. Discuss how the proposed activities are consistent with the allowable activities authorized under the statutes. (5 points)
- b. Consistency of applicant's proposed project with the risk reduction goals of the FQPA/Strategic Agricultural Initiative. The project demonstrates and facilitates the adoption of farm management decisions and practices that provide growers with "a reasonable transition" away from the highest risk pesticides. The project implements reduced use or reduced risk control techniques and products, or which demonstrates the potential for implementation of project results. (5 Points)
- c. Likelihood that the project can be replicated in other areas by other agricultural organizations to their benefit (5 points).
- d. Address a significant geographically-specific or widespread

environmental concern (5 points).

e. Addresses the sociological or economic forces that support adoption, or those impediments that limit adoption, of environmentally sensitive production systems (5 points ).

f. Demonstrate potential for long-term benefits (5 points).

g. Addresses multiple-components of the agro-ecosystem such as soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resources (5 points).

**3. Project strategy (10 points).** The proposal includes a well-conceived strategy to achieve the project goals and objectives and a reasonable schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with each goal. The applicant should identify the method that will be used to measure and document the project's results quantitatively and/or qualitatively.

**4. Measurement of Environmental Results. (Total of 20 points).** Reviewers will focus on the following components:

1. a. Progress Measures (10 points). The proposal contains clear measures of success for each major task or product, and provides a description of the format in which these measurements will be reported. The proposal also, provides a provision for a quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation of the project's success at achieving the stated goals.

b. Environmental and Performance Measures (10 points). The project should address one or more, but is not limited to, the following measures:

1. Changes in behavior of growers toward the use of lower-risk practices.
2. Reductions in number of detections of fruits and/or vegetables with tolerance violations, particularly organophosphates.
3. Acres under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. Acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides.
4. Reduction of mortality to non-target aquatic and terrestrial organisms caused by pesticides.
5. Populations of beneficial organisms in fields and adjacent habitat.

**Innovation (5 points).** Reviewers will be looking for progressive and forward-thinking projects that undertake innovative, or novel approaches. The project provides innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management. Will the project assess or suggest a new means of measuring progress in reducing risk/use of pesticides in the United States?



**Partnerships (5 points).** The proposal makes effective use of partnerships, wherever possible, to leverage other organizations' funding and expertise. The project stresses involvement of local stakeholders. Builds upon existing efforts, or leverages other significant activities or institutional efforts. Partners must provide a letter of support from an official within the organization, specifying and confirming their specific contributions to the project. Number and types of key stakeholders involved in the project should be provided.

1. **Outreach (5 points).** Supports innovative agricultural extension such as farmer-to-farmer education or farmer-scientist interaction and technology transfer.

2. **Budget (5 points).** Points will be awarded based on the adequacy of the budget information provided, and whether the budget breakout is reasonable and acceptable, and demonstrates effective and judicious use of Federal funds.

### **Extra Points**

Matching or leveraged funds provided (3 points).

### **1. Review and Selection Process**

A panel comprised of EPA Region 1 staff will evaluate each proposal based upon the criteria outlined in this RFIP. The decision for award will be based on the total number of points as described in the criteria outlined in this RFIP. This will determine which applicant(s) will be invited to submit a complete application for consideration in the second phase of the competition.

The applicant organizations whose proposal is selected will be notified via telephone on August 31, 2004, and the applicants not selected will be notified by mail. Proposals or applications may be rejected because they fail to comply with the administrative requirements of the Request for Initial Proposals, they are found to lack relevancy, or they are judged technically unacceptable. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no awards. (Note that final applications will be subject to review under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

Awards involving the collection of environmental data will be subject to the requirements of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and will require coordination with the EPA Region 1 QAPP Office located at the Region 1 Laboratory.

Decisions under this solicitation are subject to the applicable dispute resolution process under 40 CFR §30.63 and Part 31, subpart F.

Proposals should be sent to:

Andrea M. Szylvian  
EPA Region 1 Pesticide Program  
1 Congress Street Suite 1100  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

By Email: [szylvian.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:szylvian.andrea@epa.gov)

## **AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **Award Notices**

Successful applicants whose final applications have been selected and approved can expect to receive an award document which constitutes an offer to the recipient organization and sets forth the terms and conditions of the assistance agreement. As the assistance agreement is a legal document, an authorized representative of your organization must indicate acceptance by signing and returning the appropriate copies to the EPA Region 1 Grants Office. Specific instructions will be provided with the award document. The mailing address for the EPA Region 1 Grant Office is:

**EPA Region 1 Grants Management Office (MGM)**  
**Office of Administration and Resource Management**  
**1 Congress Street Suite 1100**  
**Boston, Massachusetts 02114**

### **Administration and National Policy Requirements**

Award recipients must comply with all requirements set forth in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR), Part 31 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments) and 40 CFR, Part 30 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-Profit Organizations), as applicable.

### **Reporting**

**Progress Reports:** reports describing tasks accomplished, results achieved to date including any problems encountered and how problems were overcome, and a summary of funds expended will be required on a quarterly basis, as stated in 40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. Reports should be submitted electronically if possible.

A format for the quarterly report will be sent to the grantee after the award has been made.

**Final Reports:** will be required at the completion of the project, as stated in 40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. The report will include any agreed-upon work-product(s) resulting from the project, and copies of materials generated in connection with project activities (e.g., workshop announcements, workshop sign in sheets, newspaper/newsletter announcements, articles or releases, press packets, pamphlets, etc.). Any additional requirements will be stated in the Special Conditions of the Award document.

**Financial Status Reports (FSRs):** are required on an annual basis, as stated in 40CFR§30.52 and 40CFR§31.41, as applicable. A Final FSR is required at the completion of the project.

**Agency Contact:**

Andrea M. Szylvian  
EPA Region 1  
Pesticide Program  
1 Congress Str. Suite 1100  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114  
Telephone: (617) 918-1198  
Fax: (617) 918-1505  
[szylvian.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:szylvian.andrea@epa.gov)